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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

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THE FELLOWSHIP OF SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS

The Fellowship of Socialist Christians, which publishes this journal, "seeks to interpret the meaning of the Christian faith for man's social responsibility, and to make the resources of that faith more fully available for the creation of a just social order". We invite readers of this journal who are not members of the Fellowship, to join with us. The meetings of the Fellowship are held thrice annually in or near New York. Local groups meet in some other centers.

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English Agent: Ronald Preston, Annandale, North End Road, London N. W. 11
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EDITORIALS

The International Situation

The relations between the great powers continue to deteriorate. The first session of the Security Council of the United Nations has proved that this organization contains little resource for settling difficulties between the great powers. It presupposes accord between the powers, in which case the organization could operate to police the world. When that accord is lacking it has no instruments to establish understanding. The Russians yielded reluctantly on the Iranian issue, but not before they got what they wanted in Iran. What they wanted, oil concessions, should probably have been granted to them in the first place. For there is no reason why the western powers should preempt the oil resources at Russia's doors.

The council of foreign ministers in Paris has been as unsuccessful as the meetings of the Security Council. There is no basic understanding between Russia and the west. It is difficult to understand why Russia seems to make calculated efforts to destroy the system of mutual security which she helped to set up. She is undoubtedly afraid of the western powers and probably honestly believes that they intend finally to attack her. Her conviction is probably prompted partly by our strategic preparations for such an eventuality and partly by the Marxist dogma of an irreconcilable conflict between communism and capitalism.

In any event the moral and spiritual resources for a stable peace are obviously not available. This situation of frustration will increasingly tempt the western world to hysteria. One form of this hysteria is expressed in fantastic constitutional schemes for a perfect world order, which have no relevance to the political realities at all and merely serve, consciously or unconsciously, to beguile our idealists from the real problems which face us.

The other form of hysteria expresses itself in branding every effort to get along with Russia as "appeasement". The implication of this position is that we ought to go to war with Russia now, though not all opponents of "appeasement" are honest enough to spell out what their policy means. It must be observed that whether Russian and Nazi policy are as similar as this school of hysteria claims, or not, is not completely relevant to our political decisions. There are indeed points of similarity. Russia is a dictatorship. It does not allow a free discussion of international issues. It does not let its people realize how deep the desire for peace in the

western world is. Its dictatorship may, for all we know, be playing as dangerous a game as the Nazis did; though there is still the difference that the Russians need peace and the Nazis could not live by peace. But all of these considerations are insignificant in comparison with the simple fact that a war with Russia will not solve any basic problem of the world. This is true not merely because an atomic conflict would annihilate everything. It is true because it would force the victor to rule the world; and neither possible victor is able to do so.

In a less global situation it might be argued that since it is impossible to rule a realm with two competing centers of power, it might be well to let the ultimate conflict come so that only one center of power remains. Then, it could be argued, we will have at least a tolerable peace, though a not too tolerable justice. But the world can not be ruled from one center, even if Russia and America were not as stupid as they in fact are. There is absolutely no hope in another conflict.

That is why the hysteria which might push us into another war must be avoided. That is why we must bear patiently with the present situation and not be too outraged by what seem to us the intolerable demands of a jittery partner.

The best chance of avoiding war still lies in neither strategic retreat nor in strategic challenge. It lies in the ability of the western world so to organize the economic and political life of the vast continental realms which are under the sway of its power, that communist infiltration need not be feared on the one hand, while Russia would not have to fear strategic thrusts on the other.

The chances of such a development are not too good because there is more fear than wisdom on both sides. We are truly living on borrowed time.

The Ideological Factors in the World Situation

If we omit the Orient and think only of the western world, it is interesting to note that what is known as European civilization falls into three main ideological categories: non-socialistic democracy, socialistic democracy and non-democratic socialism. America is the chief proponent of the first, Britain and the continent of the second, and Russia of the third. It is unfortunate that the two proponents of the two extremes are also the two most powerful nations on earth. That may become a reason why the world will fail to achieve a politics in which freedom and order are decently balanced.

We are the proponents of non-socialist democracy. America is the only nation, wealthy and powerful enough to indulge in *laissez-faire* illusions. Not that we are given to them completely or follow them without compromise. Yet we are the nation which can not achieve a decent housing program for our veterans or be sure of maintaining an adequate system of price regulations because our business community, or a large part of it for which the National Association of Manufacturers speaks, professes to believe that unlimited production would solve all our problems. The NAM is incidentally spending millions in advertising to make *laissez-faire* plausible. To read those advertisements is to tremble for the future of America. For they prove that American business men are incredibly stupid and

that their stupidity may wreck our nation.

One may say hopefully that the nation is wiser than its plutocracy. It has proved in every poll that it wants to maintain restrictions upon the economic process. But unfortunately we can not longer be certain that our constitutional system will function to express the popular will. The alliance between reactionary democrats and republicans is not the consequence of Mr. Truman's ineptitude. Even Mr. Roosevelt failed to triumph over it except under war pressure. It is really the consequence of a constitutional system which does not provide for a responsible government or, what is even more important, for a responsible opposition which would have to assume the consequences of its defeat of an administration program. Yet the fact that we are not as conservative as a nation as our creaking constitutional system seems to make us, can not hide the comparative economic conservatism of this wealthy nation.

On the other side of the European world, and only partly in it, is the Russian power, informed by a non-democratic socialism. Its system proves that it is possible to pay too high a price for the goal of socialism. The price is the destruction of liberty. It is not quite certain whether the complete collectivization of property would have led to as consistent a tyranny in a western nation, which has known more liberty than Russia ever knew. But it is possible that the complete collectivization of property might lead to a vexatious combination of economic and political power in any nation. Thus the Marxist dream of a free socialist society is turned into the horrible nightmare of tyranny.

It need hardly be added that the vices of these two extremes tend to aggravate the dogmatism of the proponents of each. Our American conservatives point with scorn and apprehension to the Russian scene and declare that any step toward socialization must lead to this horrible consequence. The Russians on the other hand, picture our unemployment situation in more lurid color than it deserves and pretend to congratulate their poor millions on having higher living standards than our unemployed. This assurance is probably pretty wide of the mark but it serves its purpose.

The two greatest powers in the world today both have social systems which do not really work. The one pays too high a price for economic liberty and the other sacrifices all liberties to gain economic security. Unfortunately each seeks to force their respective social systems upon Europe, which quite obviously does not want either.

If Europe were left to itself it would choose democratic socialism. It has had enough of totalitarianism. But it is also poor and its property system has gone through the meat chopper of two wars. Our "free enterprise" ideas are about as revelant to its life as the one horse chaise is to an automatic age. One of the great powers, Britain, is a part of Europe and also a part of this ideological bloc. A labor government rules in Britain.

The difficulty with this third solution, which is obviously better than either of the extremes, is that its proponents are too weak to defend it against the two mightiest powers. German workers have

proved by a vote of 7 to 1 that they prefer socialism to communism. But Germany is an occupied and divided nation; and will be for a long time to come. The rejection by the French nation of the new constitution proves that a majority feared communist domination. The socialists were compromised by that defeat, incidentally, because they played the part of the tail to the communist kite. They might still extricate themselves from that position, but they would have to have the support of the genuinely radical elements in the Catholic party. The future health of Europe depends to a considerable degree, by the way, on whether or not the Catholic workers can express their true economic convictions or will be drawn by the hierarchy into reactionary politics. In Poland the Socialist and Peasant parties would obviously have a clear majority if the country were not occupied by Russia, which will allow an election only if there is a "united ticket", calculated to hide the communist weakness. A similar situation prevails in Czecho-Slovakia.

Europe is economically too weak and politically too divided to achieve what it wants. The one hope is that Britain, which is stronger than the continent but not as strong as the other two powers, will help to extricate the continent from this sorry plight. One of the saddest aspects of the present world situation is the fact that Britain can not play its full part in the reconstruction of the continent. It is economically too beholden to us and politically too fearful of Russia to do what it ought to do and probably would like to do.

Yet one wonders whether the Labor government might not be more courageous and could not give a stronger lead upon the continent.. One wonders whether, since the sentiment of the continent favors what Britain wants, more than what we or Russia want, it could not capitalize on this asset more than the Labor government is doing. It is possible of course that the deepening rift between the west and Russia will so force Britain into our hands that it will lose all power of creative action. On the other hand there is still a possibility that Britain might become the rallying center for a European civilization, based upon a free and yet highly socialized economy. It would have to break more obviously with the diplomacy of the past than it has done. It might have to sacrifice some of its imperial counters in the international game for the sake of consolidating its continental strength.

Perhaps this is a vain hope. Perhaps the caprice of power realities runs counter to this logic too much. But mere power is sometimes forced to yield to creative resolution.

The Race Issue

Said a sensitive British Colonel, recently returned from a long stay in India: "Our position in India is untenable. It's not because we exploit India economically. We have an adverse trade balance with India and are deeply in debt to her. It's not that we could not continue to make a political contribution to India; for obviously the depth of her communal problem would prompt her to seek our aid, if racial resentment did not prevent it. Our position is untenable because race pride has ruined us in India. We have expressed our sense of racial superiority in the most offensive manner. Even now we main-

tain clubs in India to which Indians are not admitted. Our position is untenable because our race attitudes are intolerable".

This confession is an essentially correct estimate of the situation not only in India but in the world. The Anglo-Saxon race pride is only a little less offensive than the Nazi arrogance. All efforts of recent years to derive racial difficulties purely from economic and political exploitation are at least partly in error. Race pride is not a derivative but an original form of sin. It may be the fruit of other forms of pride and lust for power; but it may also be the root of such other forms. It represents in many respects a more stubborn problem than economic exploitation.

Considering our own unsolved problem of Negro-White relations we have no right to throw stones at Britain. On the other hand Britain threw stones at us because of the character of Negro-White relations in our army, while she was living in a glass house. We had better stop repenting for each other's sins and repent each for his own, or rather we had better both repent of our common sins.

The revelation of the original force in race prejudice was long delayed by the excessive economic interpretations of social evil in past decades. It is now apparent that this evil is not only one of the greatest hazards to national justice and peace, as it is in the United States, but to international accord, as it is between the west and the orient. Economic evils can be more easily corrected than the evils of race prejudice. Economic injustice can be mitigated by a better balance of economic power, whether through the socialization of property or by other means. But race prejudice can corrupt even the best economic system and poison the relations of any community. While economic depression aggravates the prejudice and economic power uses it to its advantage, race pride has its own particular sources.

In one sense race prejudice requires a genuine conversion for its elimination or mitigation more than any other social evil. For it is a form of pride which can be broken only by the kind of religious humility which recognizes the finite character of all historical and ethnic realities and the sinful pretensions to which these realities give rise. Yet religion is also the particular bearer of race prejudice.

Protestant Christianity must regard itself as particularly guilty in its failure to break the power of race prejudice. Almost every Protestant denomination is a mixture of ethnic feeling with its sense of togetherness as a community of grace. The Protestant faith is a tool of ethnic pride in Northern Ireland, in Boston, in our Southland and in South Africa, to pick out a few symbolic areas. Very few Protestant churches contain genuine symbols of the sacramental transcendence over race, so that they could truthfully say "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek".

The Peril of America

Weak men and nations frequently assume that if they only had power, they would be more secure. Actually the insecurity of human existence grows with its power. The more power an individual and nation has, the more of its life impinges upon other life and the

more wisdom is required to bring it into some decent harmony with other life.

Thus America is more insecure today than it was when in the days of its infancy, it inhabited an isolated continent. This is no argument for isolation. We can not turn the clock back which destroyed the insecurity of our continent; nor can we disavow the power of a nation which now expresses itself far beyond the national boundaries. The world has intruded upon our isolation and we have intruded upon the world by our power.

Our power has increased our insecurity the more because we have not had the time to gain political and moral wisdom, commensurate with our power. We have derived our political power from our military strength and our military strength is derived from our technical proficiency and our natural resources. We have gained power in other words by technical proficiency and not by the kind of political experience which would guarantee wisdom commensurate with our power. We are assailed by alternate moods of fear and of pride. We are afraid that someone will take advantage of us. We cast ourselves in the role of country bumpkin whose innocence may be preyed upon by the "city slickers" who inhabit the foreign offices of the world. Yet we are also conscious of our power and have moods of adolescent pride in the magnitude of it. Therefore we spent some time in flexing our muscles, to show the world just how powerful we are.

We have, to change the figure of speech, the inferiority feeling of the *nouveau riche* particularly when dealing with Britain. In one moment we resent the fact that Britain owns all the castles. In the next moment we are reassured by the knowledge that we have the mortgage to these castles. The Russians are in somewhat the same situation as we are, only worse so. It is interesting to what degree the two great powers represent the two great upsurges of new classes in modern civilization, the middle class and the worker. In both cases there is a sort of adolescent pride of power, hiding a deep sense of inferiority.

The Russians have the doubtful advantage of seeming to know where they are going. The advantage is doubtful because communist fanaticism is a poor resource for governing the world. There are many things in the heaven and hell of our era which are not dreamt of in that philosophy. We on the other hand do not know where we are going. We want democracy everywhere but think it means merely either free enterprise or free elections. Of the organic basis of a healthy society we have little notion. We do not seem to realize that copy book democratic maxims will not restore democracy upon the shattered continent of Europe. Our confusions result in a fantastic foreign politics. The effect of our influence upon the continent is almost purely nihilistic. We are doing a great deal better in Asia where the statesmanship of Marshall and of MacArthur seems to transcend the confusions of our national mind.

Our ignorance, combined with our power, make the position of America in the world very perilous. We are a peril to the world but also to ourselves. There is no simple panacea for our difficulties. We can only hope that we will have enough years of grace to learn wisdom as only experience can teach it.

Providence and Historical Confusion

"I will bring the blind by a way they know not."—Is. 42, 16.

The most remarkable aspect about our contemporary situation is that modern man's confidence in his ability to control the forces of history is so completely refuted on every hand. He has the intelligence to increase his power and freedom over nature. But he has no pure intelligence or disinterested will to bring this power under control. Every form of intelligence and will which is brought to bear upon the great issues of the day is interested intelligence and will in bondage to fear and pride. It is quite natural that some idealists would like to escape from this dilemma as Thomas Hobbes did, and try to create a world government, which would have the capacity for the disinterested justice which every particular and national form of intelligence and will in the world community lacks.

But this also is no way out, partly because such a government can not be created by a social contract, as Hobbes erroneously imagined but only by its imposition through power; and partly because the imposition of power can not create a world community if there are not stronger moral and organic forces of universal community at work than is now the case. We are in other words stumbling and blundering around in much greater darkness than most of our idealists are willing to admit. There is indeed a growing suspicion of this fact in the world; and an increasing fear and apprehension that we may stumble into world catastrophe.

Such a recognition of the limits of human intelligence does not obviate the necessity and duty of striving for the most disinterested and intelligent action possible. We must solve the problem of the atomic bomb and of the world community in the most creative possible terms. But we will have to consider the historical resources or lack of them, also. If we analyze the cause of the lack it is quite obviously the fact that human intelligence is not as pure as it imagines itself to be; but is bedeviled on every hand by the "vain imagination" of nations and races, driven to hysteria by their fears and to pretension by their pride.

In such a situation we can not give meaning to human history by insisting that it is under the sovereignty of human intelligence. Either it is a confusion of "death for the right cause and death for the wrong cause" or it has meaning because it stands under a providence which leads the blind by ways they know not of and is able to make the wrath of man to praise Him. Such faith in providence does not mean a faith in a God who overrules the vain imagination of men by capricious interference in the processes of history. The God Who is our Judge is also the Creator; and the instruments of judgment are largely the structures of the created order. Man was created for community. Since he was also created for freedom and since his freedom is subject to historical elaboration he must solve the problem of community in wider and wider terms and must rise higher and higher above the mere forces of nature which hold human life together. He must do this or perish. He may not do it and therefore perish. If this were not true his freedom would not be real. For all the modern talk about the dignity of man, modern culture has never seriously envisaged until this present moment that man really had

the freedom to destroy himself. For all of the superficial voluntarism in modern culture and despite its appeals to the human mind and will, it had really believed that nothing that man could do, would really interfere seriously with his upward march. The Christian view of the essential freedom of man is greater than in modern culture. On the other hand the Christian faith also understands that this freedom is under a tragic bondage. History therefore does not move forward merely by the increase of freedom over nature, nor yet by the operation of the structure,. Man uses his freedom to defy the structure, and the consequence is judgment.

This apprehension of judgment is one side of the Christian idea of providence. It is the side which can be at least partially understood even by a secular culture. It is apprehended by modern thought and is expressed in its increasing sense of historical doom. The other side of the Christian belief in providence is apprehended only by faith. It is the confidence that God can work a redemptive purpose in and beyond the judgment and that His love operates in and beyond his justice. This can be proven true, if it is believed but it must first be believed. It does not of course offer any assurance of the preservation of this or any civilization. It is a confidence which finally transcends the fate of all civilizations.

It is the business of the Christian church to relate this faith to the tragic realities of our day. Wrongly interpreted it can become a way of escape from our historic duties. Rightly interpreted it can give us the serenity required to do our duty in an age in which alternate hopes and fears, fulfillments and frustrations threaten to rob us of the sanity required for the fulfillment of our duties.

Unitarian Polemics

In this strange age it had been left to the American Unitarian Association to descend to a level of theological discussion never reached in our knowledge by the most obscurantist fundamentalist sect. In a pamphlet entitled "What Is This Neo-Orthodoxy?" the Unitarians carry their warfare against Christian orthodoxy in general and try to comprehend under what they call "neo-orthodoxy" such diverse thought as that of Barth, Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr, Robert Calhoun, Herbert Farmer, Bernard Iddings Bell and Monsignor Fulton Sheen. The Unitarians are obviously not talking about neo-orthodoxy for the Catholic and Anglo-Catholic objects of their strictures could certainly not be accused of being followers of Barth. Furthermore the Protestant theologians mentioned are all more or less in explicit debate with Barth. No effort is made to discriminate between the thought of any of the men attacked. But this is a small matter, because the animus of the attack is primarily directed against the classical tradition of Christianity in any of its forms.

The stupidity and the malice of the pamphlet is revealed in the two theses of the various authors. The one thesis is directed against the Christian doctrine of the sinfulness of man. The argument runs roughly as follows: To believe in the sinfulness of man is to believe in total depravity. To believe in total depravity is to accustom men to evil. Every step in this logic is false and naturally the conclusion to which it leads is false.

A certain Lester Mondale thinks that a realistic view of human nature easily "excuses personal and social inaction as well as acquiescence in the idea of dictatorship." He goes further and declares that it makes people complacent toward the human depravity revealed in the atrocities of the concentration camps. This is of course a preposterous charge in the light of the historic facts. Most of the continental resistance churches were informed by a dialectical theology. We have our own quarrel with this theology but it is stupid and malicious to deny the moral and religious heroism of continental Christianity in fighting the evils of Nazism. The same gentleman incidentally accuses American representatives of neo-orthodoxy of a national self-righteousness which "boils over at the Nazi plot to dominate the world" but "smiles beatifically over an American general's plan of aggressive defense by atomic warfare". No evidence for this charge is given. Two of the theologians castigated were signers, and one of them was the author of, the Federal Council report on "Atomic Warfare and the Christian Faith" which makes the charge quite ludicrous. A certain Herbert Hitchen accuses Barthians of being "spiritual saboteurs" and for some strange reason, thinks that the mistakes of former Ambassador Bullitt, which are not defined, are derived from Barthian theology, though there is no evidence that Mr. Bullitt has ever heard of a Christian theologian, not to speak of a neo-orthodox one.

The second thesis has the following logic to support it. Modern orthodoxy is a revival of Calvinism. Calvinism is deterministic. Therefore modern orthodoxy is deterministic. It does not believe in doing anything about anything but in waiting upon God to save the world. Every step in this logical process is also false. None of the theologians mentioned share Calvin's determinism; and Calvinistic determinism, whatever its faults, did not lead to inaction. Niebuhr and Sheen are both accused of being "futilitarian gadflies". There is not only practically nothing in common between their thought but both of them are very active in political causes, though the causes are more or less diametrically opposed. To complete this farrago of nonsense one author equates modern orthodoxy with individualistic pietism and declares the message of modern Christian theology to be "Man is out of tune with God. Get right with God and the world will attune itself regardless of international attitudes and relationships."

Only one of the essays reveals any evidence of having digested any of the thought which is castigated. Yet it would hardly seem possible to misinterpret the thought of opponents quite as grossly as this out of mere stupidity. Here we might turn to Calvin for an explanation and learn from him that most forms of human sinfulness are something more than stupidity and something less than malice.

At any rate this official document of Unitarianism gives a rather sorry evidence of the state of theological culture and of religious imagination in the heart of Unitarianism.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN

By R. S. JOHNSON

"Patriotism and religion", says de Tocqueville, "are the only forces in the world which can permanently direct the whole of a body politic to one end". Perhaps the most astounding aspect of politics in Britain since the General Election of last July has been the co-operation between the two great parties, and between the country and the Government. Without doubt, it has been patriotism rather than religion which has directed our political affairs to one end. It has been the association of the good of the nation with democracy and the realization that a Britain divided is a beaten Britain. Other factors are, of course, also relevant. Religion, however, is hardly one. Swift said that "in religion many have just enough to make them hate one another, not enough to make them love one another". Politicians and those politically minded do not, however, speaking generally, care sufficiently about religion for religion to be a cause either of hatred or of love. This is not to deny that there are men, and notable men too, such as Sir Stafford Cripps and the Prime Minister, whose faith is deep and therefore causative of love. Nor is it to deny that the Communist Party in Britain is weak and that the Labour Party, as the Conservative, has roots in the Church and that British Socialism has little or nothing in common, philosophically, with Continental Socialism.

In this article it will be assumed that the policy which the Labour Party submitted to the country in July and the aims and structure of the British Labour Party are, at least in broad outline, familiar. I shall comment upon the first six months of the new Government, sketch certain aspects of the nature of the present Parliamentary Labour Party, and outline some of the important problems which the Government faces. This is an enormous task, and the treatment will, inevitably, be rough.

From July to January

Probably the general consensus of opinion is that the Government acquitted itself well. There was, of course, criticism but there was not insurrection by any section of the population nor, by the better informed, really radical criticism. The official opposition, for example, was, on the whole, sympathetic. This satisfaction or acquiescence can be partly explained by the fact that the Government did not commit any serious blunders. The two major events during the period were the introduction of the Coal Industry Nationalization Bill and the debate on the Final Act of the Bretton Woods Monetary and Financial Conference, the Financial Agreement between this country and the U. S. A. and the proposals for consideration by an International Conference on Trade and Employment. On the second the Conservatives, in general, abstained from voting and the first was only introduced toward the end of the term and was not debated. "The Economist" of

December 12, 1945, concludes an article on the Bill as follows: "For the moment it must be enough to say that the decision to nationalise the mines once taken (and it is a decision from which only a small minority will dissent), the Bill is on the right lines. In nearly every matter where a decision has been taken and recorded in the Bill, it is the right decision. With the one outstanding exception (which is the Chancellor of the Exchequer's responsibility rather than that of the Minister of Fuel and Power), it is a good beginning." The "one outstanding exception" refers to the form in which compensation shall be paid. Compensation is not to be paid in cash but Government stock. So long as the recipient can turn his stock into cash by selling it at the issue price there can be no objection to this form of compensation. The present Bill, however, contains the provision that the stock given in compensation shall not be negotiable so long as it remains in the hands of companies or holders other than individuals. The Government should, in the interests of expediency as well as morality, pay its debts more honestly. Out of fairness to the Government it must be added that the stock in the hands of companies or of holders other than individuals is to be non-negotiable in order to avoid inflation. Now (March, 1946) the Bill is at the committee stage and the Minister of Fuel and Power has announced all but one of the names of the members of the National Coal Board which, under him, is to control the industry. The Board is highly talented, representing great experience of colliery technique, labor organization, service and commercial practice.

More must be said about the Washington proposals. In the United States these proposals have been hailed as a positive contribution by the United States to the establishment of peace and plenty. Yet in Britain, although adopted by large Parliamentary majorities, they have evoked an almost universal chorus of doubt, disappointment and dislike.

Britain must appear a grudging and ungrateful borrower. The first point to emphasize is that we fully appreciate both the cancellation of Lend-Lease obligations and the liberal terms of the loan itself. But having got into debt we are determined to get out of it and we believe that the conditions attached to the loan will make it harder for us to do so. Furthermore, it has been widely noted that, whereas Britain is committed to make immediate concessions in the removal of exchange restrictions, the United States merely expresses the intention of aiming at reductions in trade barriers. We are left to hope that the American tariff will be sufficiently reduced in fact to enable America to be a good creditor. More important still, we fear the prospect of an American slump, which, by its impact on world exports, would spread depression and unemployment, wreck the embryonic system of multilateral trade, and make Britain's export problem insoluble, and default on its foreign debts inevitable. In this respect our acceptance of the loan is a gamble. On the other hand, the agreements and proposals taken as a whole mark a great step forward in Anglo-American collaboration. In particular two gaps separating our two countries have been bridged, at least in theory. We have both explicitly recognized, first, that the fundamental purpose of exporting is to pay for needed imports and, second, that expansionist policies are essential to a high level of

international trade. The common task ahead of us is to see that the proposed International Trade Organization (and with it the Bretton Woods monetary agencies) is made an effective reality, and that its deliberations on employment policy result on the part of the sovereign States composing it in the action which is still needed to save the world from catastrophe.

Four thousand million dollars may sound a lot of money, but, in fact, it is no more than the national income earned in this country in the course of a month and a half. Far from suddenly transforming Britain into a land of plenty, it will not wholly pay for the import surplus needed to restore our pre-war standard of living over the next three years. This is not stated as a complaint to the United States but as necessary to a balanced view of the proposals. It is not a complaint even though Britain's difficulties arise entirely from its great share in the common war effort —a share which, in relation to its resources, has been far greater than that of the United States. The argument of "common sacrifice" would logically demand an estimate of the relative contribution, economic and human, of the United Nations, and this is not possible.[1]

One final point calls for emphasis. The Washington proposals, whether they are accepted or rejected by Congress, have an influence upon Britain's Labour Government. It is not true, however, to assert that the success of the Labour Government depends upon the acceptance or rejection of the proposals. Rejection would cause hardship to the people of this country but not the downfall of the Government; acceptance, while it could present the Labour Government with immensely difficult problems, could not automatically, even in the event of a slump in the U. S. A., make socialism in Britain impossible of realization.

My failure to refer to the Bill to nationalize the Bank of England—or, as the Bill itself more demurely puts it, "to bring the capital stock of the Bank of England into public ownership"—may cause surprise. This measure, however, was not of radical importance for, in the main, it legalized a position which has existed for several years owing to the voluntary decision of the directors of the Bank to co-operate with the Treasury. The purpose of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was plain, to respect all those with fluttering hearts. The compensation that the present shareholder will receive has been fairly assessed: the Governor and Deputy Governor are to be appointed for five-year terms and sixteen directors for four-year terms, four of them retiring every four years (all these appointments are to be made by the Crown, i.e., the Government): the clauses dealing with the management of the Bank have been drafted with an eye to changing as little as possible. If the Bank ever was responsible for a "bankers' ramp" or for flouting the wishes of the Foreign Office, it will not be able to act likewise again. It is most doubtful if these common charges can be substantiated, but the bringing of "the capital stock of the Bank of England into public ownership" should make their future occurrence impossible. The nationalization of the Bank of England is more quixotic than important, though it does

[1] For all which I have written on the financial and commercial relations between the United States and Britain, I am greatly indebted to the Planning broadsheet No. 243 (published by Political and Economic Planning, 16, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1).

ensure that in all circumstances the Treasury really rules.

The Parliamentary Labour Party Today

As a result of the July election the quality as well as the quantity of Labour candidates returned altered considerably. Up to 1939 over half the Labour members were Trade Union officials, many of whom were elderly. Age may spell wisdom, but the Unions tended to send old men into Parliament, not so much because these were their best men as because by so doing they relieved themselves, partly, of their duty to award pensions. The Unions liked to keep their best men for their own work. Now the average age of Labour M. P.'s has been radically reduced and the Parliamentary Labour Party is a good cross section of the nation. Only 20 per cent of the Labour M. P.'s are officials of Trade Unions or other bodies, and two-thirds are financed by the local constituency parties. It may be worth-while to quote the occupational background of the present Labour members:

126 from the Services
150 manual workers—chiefly mines, transport and distribution
44 lawyers
49 university lecturers or school teachers
26 journalists
15 doctors and dentists
18 business men
21 women (8 of them housewives)
16 technicians and managers
4 farmers
4 shopkeepers

It is also noteworthy that 254 of the successful Labour candidates are members of the Fabian Society. The House, once again, abounds with talent and diverse experience. The Fabian Society, perhaps I should add, is the most intellectually alive branch of the Labour Movement. It is, mainly, a research body for inquiries into problems of Socialist policy, and for the issue of informative books and pamphlets on home, colonial and international subjects.

Some Problems of the Future

The Government is expressing itself fairly frequently about the need for efficiency in our industry, in order to improve our economic well being. There is a substantial accumulation of evidence to show that British industry vis-a-vis industry in the U. S. A. has a low production per man hour. In October, 1944, we received the report of the Sir Frank Platt Cotton Textile Mission to the U. S. A. The Mission collected many facts on output in the U. S. A. and compared them with the facts of the Cotton Textile industry over here. "With normal staffing," the Mission reports, "British P.M.H. (production per man hour) is less than American by approximately 18 per cent to 49 per cent in spinning, by 80 per cent to 85 per cent in winding, by 79 per cent to 89 per cent in beaming and 56 per cent to 67 per cent in weaving." In other words, the average American worker produces from one and a quarter to ten times as much in an hour as the average British worker. The Bossom report on technical methods in the American building industry placed the efficiency of the British building industry in much the same unfavorable light. A report by American engineers on the technical efficiency of the British Coal industry is known to be in existence and is said to be almost equally damning. The now fashionable doctrine that the efficiency of industry can be measured

in terms of the P.M.H. in those industries for which it has been calculated, is open to objection. First, the economy as a whole must be used in the calculation of economic efficiency. Second, P.M.H. in one industry does not correctly measure its efficiency, since the calculation takes no account of the labor embodied in the capital equipment used in that industry. There are other difficulties but it would seem that it is on the whole valid to measure relative efficiency by a comparison of figures of P.M.H.

The four most important problems of economic policy are the achievement of social security, the maintenance of a high level of employment, the reorganization and development of the system of international trade and the increase of our National Income. The Government recognizes that all these problems have to be tackled and that redistribution of the existing national income will not, by itself, ensure economic well-being, for the existing national income is not large enough. Redistribution of this income is a moral necessity but redistribution alone will not ensure economic well-being. The Government, in the stress it puts on the economic factor, cannot legitimately be dubbed materialistic. It is only admitting what experience has taught most people, namely, that a full life depends, amongst other things, on having enough to eat.

Bills dealing with social security and with the maintenance of a high level of employment are already before the House while "working parties" and nationalization are expected to increase production per man hour. "Working parties" are not socials at which ladies, young and old, meet in order to knit socks and jumpers. They consist usually of four members representing the manufacturers in a given industry, four representing the operatives and four expert members from outside the industry, with an independent chairman. The function of the working parties, which already exist for five industries, is to increase efficiency. Sir Stafford Cripps, when addressing the pottery manufacturers, said that the terms of reference of the working party would be along these lines: "to review all suggestions and proposals made with regard to the pottery industry and advise the Government on what steps, if any, should be taken to make the industry as efficient as possible in the national interest." Economic well-being is dependent upon a solution of all the problems mentioned above. As yet, of course, the Government has not solved them: it has, however, showed itself aware of their existence.

Relevant to our prosperity are also, of course, the Labour situation and the type of training given to men entering business. Strikes have been noticeable but not widespread. Shortly, doubtless, the Trade Disputes Act (1927) will be repealed *in toto* and the general strike will thereby in a sense be legalized. It would seem, however, that legislation against strikes hardly affects their size or frequency. It is not the repeal of this Act but rather the tiredness of workers and the gulf between the men and some of their officials which make widespread strikes a possibility. The lack of confidence which some union members have in some of their leaders is due partly to the fact that the leaders have been occupied in Government work and unable, therefore, to visit their branches as frequently as was their custom. The conflict, however, probably has deeper

causes such as the acceptance by the leaders, through their wider experience, of some of the points of view of the management. The leaders are more likely than the men to see, for example, the need for a national wages policy. While leaders should travel more and men should get more rest, the most effective way of avoiding strikes would seem to be for the unions to carry out even more educational work. It is important, also, that management should consider the status as well as the conditions of work and wages of operatives.

The need of a national policy for wages is great, so as to prevent a sectional pressure and scramble for individual increases. In existing circumstances such pressures tend to produce inflation and make the proper allocation of manpower by money incentives, rather than by direction, well-nigh impossible. The Government has, as yet, made no pronouncement in favor of a wages policy but has recognized the existence of the problem. There will doubtless be a policy, though it may be more sectional than national.

Little attention was given to training for business between the two wars. It was generally assumed that management was common sense. Now, however, the Government and other associations are studying the matter seriously. This is most welcome and we may find before so very long that business is regarded somewhat more as a profession.

Some people, notably Doctor James Burnham, envisage the new manager as, in the short run, a political tyrant. There are strong arguments to support this thesis but most managers in this country, it would seem, realize that it is the Cabinet and not they which control affairs and there are few managers who even wish to take political power into their own hands.

Other problems before the Government include the control of land use (compensation and betterment), the welfare and development of the Colonies, the reform of local government—one of the pillars of democracy—and the issues of compensation management, capitalization, and position of labor in nationalized industries. The present land system impedes proper town and country planning through the difficulty of controlling the use to which land is put without paying fabulous compensation, through the failure to recover betterment from owners of land, the value of which has been increased by planning and public improvement schemes, and through the absence (except in a few narrowly defined cases) of powers of compulsory acquisition of land for planning. A fourth difficulty arises through the absence of any aid by grant from the Exchequer to assist local authorities to meet the heavy cost resulting from the purchase of land or control of its use. Complex as these problems are, the Government expects to introduce, shortly, measures which will deal with them. It will probably, amongst other things, transfer to public ownership the development rights of nearly all land.

In regard to the colonies, it would seem that the £120,000,000 allocated to them under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1945, will be wisely administered. The sum is of course pitifully inadequate but the Government cannot be accused of being unaware of this. The reform of local government brings one up against vested interests

and as yet there are no indications of the central government being willing to heap coals of fire on its head. In the meantime, the need for reform tends to increase, as do the burdens resulting from the existing system. In Britain Health, Education, Housing and Town Planning are generally regarded as the concern of national politics. The initiative is taken by the Government and the issues are debated in Parliament. But none of them is in fact executed by the Government; in all of them, the local authorities are the operative bodies. In view of the importance of the above problems the efficiency of the system of local government must be considered. There is reason to doubt whether the system, as it now stands, is capable of carrying the burdens being placed upon it. The main subjects of doubt are two: the existing size of the local authority and the existing system of local authority finance. For the administration of some services, the existing local authorities are too small and it is, in general, true that the richest areas have the lowest rates and the least need of new services and vice versa.

The opposition accuses the Government of not knowing what it is going to do with those industries which it plans to nationalize. Doubtless, the Cabinet considers the issues of compensation, management, capitalization and the position of labor to be extremely complex but its comparative silence on these matters is probably indicative of thought rather than of dismay at their extent. Under management I include the principles on which State owned industries should recruit their staffs, measure their costs and fix their selling prices. I include also the relationship between Parliament and management. By capitalization I refer to the conditions under which nationalized industries are to be developed and their capital replenished in the long run. When the State has transferred industries to public ownership, should it be more energetic or less, than private industry, in scrapping assets which no longer earn a competitive return? How will it feed new capital into these industries and how will it decide their proper size? Under the position of labor I include the issue of encouraging people to work harder. People say that they won't work for profit but only for the community. It is highly doubtful, however, if operatives in nationalized industries will make their deeds match their words. Money as an incentive to work cannot be used without limit (through fear of inflation) and in any case money, under present conditions, does not seem to act strongly as an incentive. There is a great need for a close study of incentives.

This catalogue of problems does not claim to be thorough or even selective on the principle of importance. Such a catalogue would, of course, have to include India, Palestine, and international relations.

In regard to these three matters most people, I think it would be true to say, feel lost and without hope. The Government, of course, is acting but its action does not seem to bring hope to people. Perhaps one of the most important steps which need taking in international affairs today, is the stressing of the goodness rather than the sinfulness of man. The necessary emphasis on sin has already been made and stress on goodness would encourage people, directly, to be creative and to have hope. It might develop a sense of trust not only between

individuals but also between nations. Many people in the U. S. A. may wonder whether the Labour Government will improve British-Russian relations and whether it will be imperialistic. It is regrettable but it is, I think, true that British-Russian relations are not likely to be improved just because Britain has a Socialist government. There is a section of the Parliamentary Labour Party which adopts almost an attitude of adoration toward the Soviet Union but the attitude of the majority is only one of friendliness, of greater friendliness, though, than that of the Conservatives. Unhappily, the Russians seem to regard democratic socialists as a greater menace than Conservatives. If by imperialism is meant a ruthless exploitation of primitive people by more civilized ones, then the Labour Government is not and will not be imperialistic. If, however, imperialism means the defense of vital and strategic interests and the government from outside of less developed peoples that they may progress toward self-government and a higher standard of living, then the Labour Government is imperialistic.

The last question I shall deal with is one which is usually asked of almost any Labour Government, namely, "How long will it last?" The present Government could be overthrown by a split within the Parliamentary Labour Party or by a public outcry. The likelihood of a split seems to be very slight, but it is probable that a large section of the daily press is waiting for the Government to bungle one important matter. When and if that happens, we shall probably hear a great deal about "The Constitution" and the "Mandate from the People". If fundamental matters were at stake the Government would probably fall. If the Press was only having a nightmare it is unlikely that the great bulk of the electorate would be deceived. We, in Britain, have learned much.

I cannot say, because I do not know, how members of the Protestant Church view the change of Government. The Church is, I suspect, fairly equally divided between the two main parties, with a tendency for a majority of the prominent people to favor Labour. Only too often it is true that "in a change of government the poor change nothing but their masters". Many members of the Church believe, however, that the new Government is fulfilling to a large extent its proper function, namely, "to make it easy for people to do good, and difficult for them to do evil".

A CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO COLLECTIVISM

By ROBERT G. MIDDLETON

I

A keen observer of the European situation, W. A. Visser 'tHooft, prophesies that three great forces—liberalism, socialism and communism—will go into the making of postwar Europe. It is interesting and significant that no matter which of these three proves dominant, Europe is fated to live in an increasingly collectivistic society. Even the liberalism which Dr. 'tHooft envisages is not at all the liberalism of other days. It is, rather, a type of liberalism which will "accept the principle of planning and a directed economy." [1] Many other observers agree with Dr. 'tHooft that the trend toward collectivism, made necessary because of modern technological achievements and the resultant interdependence among men, cannot be halted. According to Raoul de Roussy de Sales, it is "an imperative which operates regardless of the political and philosophical systems." [2]

But this trend is looked upon with very different attitudes. Radicals like Max Lerner applaud the trend; liberals like Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich A. Hayek see in it only the operations of an "omnipotent government" destined to lead us down "the road to serfdom"; conservatives like Henry M. Wriston view the trend as a "challenge to freedom."

[1] Visser 'tHooft, *Reconstruction and Inter-church Aid in Europe*, p. 6.
[2] *The Making of Tomorrow*, p. 331.

Whatever one's individual attitude, this trend toward collectivism is important for the Christian churches. Since the trend of the governments of Europe is strongly toward collectivism, the Christians of Europe are going to live under economies quite different from that under which Christians in the United States will be living. This nation has a certain margin for experiment which is denied to other nations. There is, therefore, the danger that the cleavage between American and European Christianity, which has always existed to a certain degree, may be widened. Because the Protestant churches in this land are predominantly middle class in their economic basis, there is always the temptation to equate Christianity with bourgeois individualism. This in turn gives rise to the idea, which is frequently encountered in American Church circles, that any form of collectivism is necessarily unchristian. Hence the development of a Christian approach to collectivism becomes on our part an adventure in understanding which may narrow the gulf between the Christians of Europe and America.

It is, of course, obvious that there is no single Christian position on this issue. This is a realm of technical knowledge, of concrete policies, of political and economic plans, in which equally sincere Christians may differ profoundly. It is not my purpose in this essay to attempt

to present *the* Christian approach to collectivism, but rather to state a *possible* approach and to attempt to demonstrate that collectivism is not without a Christian defense.

The first task is to understand why this trend exists. It is then necessary to understand what collectivism is and what it involves. We can then see what light Christian faith can throw on this crucially important modern development.

II

Collectivism did not arise in a vacuum. No group of men, either saints or sinners, sat down and planned it. The trend toward collectivism has a clear history, and its rise can be explained in terms of social conditions. It arose as an attempt to meet the changed conditions of a new day. It arose because alternative methods of organizing mans economic life failed.

The chief alternative to collectivism as a means of organizing economic life is capitalism. The capitalist dream can be summed up quite simply. It resides in a faith in the profit motive as the dynamic, the free market as the mechanism, and the government as a mechanic whose function is to see that nothing happens to impede the automatic operation of the machinery. If this system is to work efficiently, certain conditions must be fulfilled. There must be a minimum of external restraints upon the system's operation. The profit motive must be given full sway in economic life, each individual being free to pursue his own profit in any manner he wishes. Self-interest is to be the sole regulating principle, and out of the sum of individual self-interest there is to result universal good. This happy result is to be guaranteed, according to capitalist theory, by the automatic action of the law of supply and demand. Summarized very briefly, these are the guiding principles of capitalism. The result of the operation of this system will be the highest standard of living men can attain.

It would be folly not to recognize that at one time in history capitalism was a decided boon. It broke the fetters on economic life which had been placed by feudalistic and mercantilist societies. It set free creative energies. It resulted in the creation of beneficent technological improvements. For its time it was no doubt right. But unless signs are wrong, its time is now past. The future does not lie with capitalism.

For the capitalist reality of today is a vast contradiction to the capitalist dream of yesterday. The detailed proof of capitalism's failure cannot be entered here, for it is too long a story. But it can be said briefly that capitalism has failed judged simply from the point of view of economic efficiency. It has not worked as it promised. The conditions necessary for its proper functioning no longer obtain. The trend toward monopoly, which has continued despite the efforts of government to arrest it, abolishes the free market. More than that, the capitalist economy has shown itself subject to increasingly serious breakdowns. The problem of unemployment defied solution under capitalism without the artificial boom of a war economy. Equally baffling was the problem of distribution; our economy showed the most glaring inequalities in income. According to the Brookings Institution, in our most prosperous year, 1929, one-tenth of one per cent of the population at the

top of the income scale had an income equal to that of 41 per cent of the population at the bottom of the scale.

Nor is that all. Capitalism has resulted in the creation of a vast number of rootless human beings. They are the men and women without status or function in modern society. Yet a healthy society is possible only when the individuals in it are integrated; and an indispensable part of such integration is the consciousness of being useful, of having some function to fulfill, some contribution to make to the common good. But that is precisely what capitalism has failed to give to so many people. The situation of these people is dangerous, since they create within the social order a group which feels bound to the community only by ties of force. Peter F. Drucker has vividly described this group: "For the individual without function and status, society is irrational, incalculable and shapeless. The 'rootless' individual, the outcast . . . sees no society. He sees only demoniac forces, half sensible, half meaningless, half in light and half in darkness, but never predictable. . . . Unless the purpose, aims, actions and motives of the individual member are integrated with the purpose, aims, actions and motives of society, society cannot understand or contain him." [3]

Capitalism today, then, has failed. "The capitalist dream," says Max Lerner, "has ended in the capitalist agony." [4] What is to replace it?

In the light of contemporary events, the answer seems quite clear. Though at different speeds and in different degrees, nations are moving in the direction of a collectivist society. To move into such a society does not imply the necessity of revolution, at least not violent revolution. It does make necessary what Harold Laski calls "revolution by consent," according to which the present wielders of economic power peacefully give up that power to the central government. From capitalism to collectivism is the road modern society must travel; and our hope of making it a creative advance lies in effecting the transition by peaceful, democratic means.

But what is collectivism? According to the late Carl Becker, collectivism is "the governmental regulation or control of the economic life of the community. Such regulation or control may be more or less complete, so that there are different kinds of collectivism, depending upon the extent to which the regulation or control is carried out and the methods by which it is achieved." [5] Such a definition is broad enough to cover all forms of collectivism, but for the purposes of this paper a more definite idea of the structure of the collectivist state is needed. The collectivism which is assumed as the basis of discussion in this paper is that labeled "democratic collectivism" or "social democracy." It is probably only this type of collectivism with which Christian faith can have any sympathy. For this type alone gives promise of performing two crucially important tasks. First, it gives promise of making a creative attack on those problems of our technological age which must be solved if we are ever again to have a functioning society. And second, it gives promise of maintaining those fundamental liberties without which no

[3] *The Future of Industrial Man*, p. 28.
[4] *It Is Later Than You Think*, p. 46.
[5] *How New Will the Better World Be?*, p. 134.

measure of economic security means anything.

Such a democratic collectivism demands, as Harold Laski points out, "that the fundamental bases of economic power shall be in the hands of the community. . . ." [6] There are four such fundamental bases. There is, first, the control of supply and credit, involving the nationalization of the banking structure, the insurance companies, and the building companies. There is, second, the state ownership or control of the land. Third, the state must control import and export trade. And fourth, there must be state ownership and control of transportation, fuel and power. These are the changes, in general, which collectivism demands.

It is important to realize what this does not involve. Private property is not abolished. The government does not control everything. Despite the hysteria of Hayek, this program does not mean that the government will become omnipotent. There will still be large areas of individual initiative and considerable private enterprise. What collectivism does involve is an increased amount of governmental regulation of industries that are of basic importance in the national economy.

III

With this brief consideration of the reasons for the trend toward collectivism today and outline of its chief features, we are in a position to try to determine a Christian approach to this type of economy. As we approach this question as Christians, it ought to be clear that collectivism makes possible certain ethical ideals which merit the sanction of Christian faith.

Collectivism makes possible, in the first place, an attack on the problems of poverty and want. In our modern society these evils have passed the stage where they could be treated as matters for private amelioration. They are large-scale problems. They can be attacked successfully only by collective action.

It is one of the great gains of the social movement within Christianity that we realize today the importance of the environment in conditioning men. We know that while it may not be impossible to be Christian in a society which violates Christian principles, it nevertheless is a terribly difficult task. Man must live in society, and that society impinges upon his life at a multitude of points. If the society is so organized that it flouts all Christian teachings, that influence is bound to be felt by the individuals living in such an order and their Christian lives are bound to suffer as a result. It is important to realize that this is true not only of the victims of social injustice but also of those who are supposed to benefit from the injustice. Just as Tolstoy said in his day that serfdom was anti-Christian because it made the serf sub-human and the landlord sub-Christian, so in our day the same thing is true: our order is anti-Christian because it reduces the victims to a sub-human level and forces the privileged to live as sub-Christians. If Christian love is to be at all relevant to life today, it must seek a method of changing the social order and making it a fit place for the development of Christian lives.

Moreover, these problems of poverty and want confront modern society in a

[6] *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*, p. 349.

special way. For our modern society is in a position different completely from that of earlier societies. They faced the problem of production; there simply was not enough to go around no matter how hard men worked and no matter how the goods were divided. But that is not our problem. For perhaps the first time in history we are in a position in which want could be abolished, not theoretically but actually. Ours is the problem not of production but of distribution. *Want is not necessary in modern society.* No less an authority than Sir William H. Beveridge writes that "abolition of want just before this war was easily within the economic resources of the community; want was a needless scandal due to not taking the trouble to prevent it." [7] This realization that want and poverty are not necessary in the modern world has been given emphatic expression by the ecumenical movement of the Church. At the Oxford Conference, Christian thinking on economic issues took a great step forward. The section of the Report dealing with "The Church and the Economic Order" affirmed that we now have the technological resources to abolish want, and went on to say: "This possibility marks off our time from the period of the New Testament and from other periods in which Christian thinking about economic life has been formulated. In the light of it the direction of Christian effort in relation to the economic order should henceforth be turned from charitable paternalism to the realization of more equal justice in the distribution of wealth." [8] If the churches are seriously committed to the seeking of a more just distribution of wealth, as such judgments clearly imply, they must work for the achievement of a society which will make their professed ideal a living reality.

But this problem of distribution is of tremendous magnitude. It is hard to imagine how private enterprise could solve it or even desire to solve it. This is something for the group to insist upon. The government alone, by rational planning which makes the abolition of poverty a basic aim of policy, can do the job.

In the second place, collectivism makes possible the shift from a society judged in terms of the wealth it produces to a society judged by the degree of human welfare it grants its members.

Whatever else one may say of capitalism, there are not many things to be said in behalf of its ethical implications. By and large, capitalism is a materialistic outlook. It is dominated by money values. It is weak ethically fundamentally because it leads to the creation of a thing-centered and not a man-centered culture.

The whole ethos of capitalism is to talk as though men existed for things rather than things for men. Many years ago R. H. Tawney was surprised to hear people "talk as though man existed for industry instead of industry existing for man." [9] Yet this is the outlook which is forced upon men by such a system as capitalism. It is commonplace, for example, to hear labor discussed as though men were only commodities to be bought in the market at the cheapest price possible. The violence which such a view does to the Christian doctrine of man is perfectly clear. It must, of course,

[7] "Freedom in Social Security," in *Beyond Victory*, ed. by R. N. Anshen, p. 265.

[8] *Oxford Conference Report*, "The Church and the Economic Order," Part. III.

[9] *The Acquisitive Society*, p. 49.

be granted that there are hosts of men who do not like to do the sort of thing which a capitalistic system forces them to do. They have no choice. To a great degree the system has determined for them their own actions. And however much they regret their actions, they cannot change them so long as the dominant values of society are material values.

Collectivism surely finds alliance with Christianity if it makes possible this shift from a society judged in terms of wealth to a society judged in terms of persons and their welfare. The trend toward collectivism, so far as it aids in making this change, deserves the aid of the awakened conscience of the Christian churches. Indeed, the future may well depend upon how deeply we make that transition. If we are ever again to have an affirmative society, one in which men and women will have status and function and dignity, it will be only as we place human values in the center and judge all material things in terms of their influence upon human welfare. "It is clear," E. H. Carr writes, "that the regulating force of the economic system under which we live must more and more be sought in the realm of ethics rather than in the operations of a price mechanism; and nearly everyone agrees that the trend in this direction should be encouraged and intensified." [10]

But a word of caution is necessary here. Collectivism, no matter what its type, is not going to usher us into Utopia. Nor will it change man's essential nature. There will still be sin, greed and acquisitiveness. The aim is not the fatuous one of eliminating these forces completely, but the reasonable one of controlling them more effectively. Under collectivism no one ought to expect them to be eradicated. We have every right to demand their modification.

In the third place, collectivism is an ethical value and deserves the support of Christian faith, because it helps toward the reinstatement of democracy in a genuine sense. Capitalism and democracy were married early, and for a time lived very amicably together. But "the happy marriage between our economic system, capitalism, and our political philosophy, democracy, has been constantly deteriorating for the last one hundred years, and more rapidly in recent years. . . ." [11] There are many today who doubt whether the marriage can last much longer.

In a very real sense, capitalism and democracy are in contradiction today. It is of the essence of democracy that the power in the society shall be in the hands of the people. It is government of, by and for the people. But the capitalist reality is something quite different. For there can be no question but that the dominant power in modern society is economic power. The title of Robert A. Brady's book, *Business as a System of Power,* sums up the whole matter. Business today is power. It is the dominant power in modern society.

This constitutes a serious threat to democratic procedures. It divides our society against itself. "Modern industry," Alexander D. Lindsay points out, "is oligarchical or monarchical, not democratic. . . . A modern industrial society, with a democratic government

[10] *Conditions of Peace,* p. 82.

[11] de Sales, *op. cit.,* p. 109.

and an oligarchically controlled system of production, is a house divided against itself." [12] And a house divided against itself cannot stand.

The danger in such concentration of power arises from the fact that it is irresponsible. It owes allegiance to nothing and no one save its own interests. The plain fact is that if power is not to become tyrannical, it must be made responsible. But it is not responsible at present in democratic society, and until it is made responsible, democracy can have no real health. The only hope of fulfilling the democratic imperative is to place economic power in the hands of the people, because without it political power is an empty formality. Our choice, as Professor Tawney puts it, is "between a monopoly which is irresponsible and private and a monopoly which is responsible and public." [13] To make democracy effective and real is impossible without collectivism.

It is not necessary to identify Christianity and democracy in order to see that Christian values have a far greater chance of realization under such a form of government than under any other. Christianity and democracy may not be identical, but they are closely allied. The values of democracy are derived from Christianity and the values of Christianity find their best chance of fulfillment in democracy. It seems, therefore, that Christian forces ought to support and further those changes in modern society which give promise of making democracy real, not only in a political sense but in an economic sense as well. The trend toward social democracy aims to do that.

[12] *Religion, Science and Society in the Modern World*, p. 56.
[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 225.

IV

But if collectivism is to find an ally in Christianity, it is necessary to come to terms with a basic issue: the question of power. This question of power is one which Christian thinkers have not faced with any great degree of realism. On every hand there is great fear of power but little awareness of how important it is. The fear which many show in the face of the trend toward collectivism roots fundamentally in their distrust of governmental power. This affects all elements of society, but it touches the modern liberal more than most.

The fear of power on the part of the modern liberal has two sources, one historical and the other contemporary. A large part of this fear is an inheritance from our political tradition. Stemming as it does from Hobbes and Locke, our tradition looks upon government power as an evil. It may be necessary, but it is still evil. The government is a negative instrument only; it can't be used for any positive end. It must be watched constantly, for it will seek always to increase its power at the expense of men. Our individualistic political tradition has never come to terms with the basic question of power. Power has been looked upon as evil and its necessity only reluctantly admitted. As a result, there is a strong current of close to anarchism running through much democratic thinking. We see power's danger; we are blind to its possibilities. Lord Acton's aphorism—"Power always corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely"—has become the modern liberal's creed. Despite the

measure of truth in this aphorism, its chief result has been to paralyze men of good will at the very moment when men of evil were most active and daring. The result was that democracy was first shorn of power and then sacrificed in many countries.

The contemporary root of the fear of power is the rise of the fascist and communist totalitarianisms. They have power, and they use it to stifle every movement of social, political, religious or intellectual liberty. The man of today has seen these systems rise. He has seen what happens to his cherished freedoms when this has happened. He then turns his hatred for these governments into all-pervading distrust of all governmental power. With his mind paralyzed by the barbarism of these systems, he is unwilling to grant his own government the power without which it must remain ineffectual; and because he keeps his own government from using its power, he creates all unknowingly the very soil in which these hated systems can grow. He finds that when government is weak, strong men will take it over. He wakes up, then, a chastened and sober man, faced either with the necessity of conformity to a regime his timidity helped to create or with the discomforts of a concentration camp.

When these two sources of the distrust of power are added together, the result is the refusal to see the inevitability of power in modern society. The illusion persists in many quarters that government functions by some strange and automatic process. Because so many refuse to see power's inevitability, they are driven to pretend that it does not exist. This is the dream-house of much modern idealistic thought.

If we are to awaken from our dreaming, we must begin by recognizing that power is inevitably going to be lodged somewhere in modern society. If it is not responsible power, it will be irresponsible power. In any case, someone or some group is going to provide the power without which government could not function. It is of crucial importance, as I have tried to point out, that in a democracy the power be kept in the hands of the government. It must be kept responsible.

It is not enough, however, to say only that power is inevitable. We can go on and say that power, in itself, is neutral. It is neither good nor bad. It is a technique, and its ethical goodness or badness depends upon the uses to which it is put. As Max Lerner puts it, without a philosophy of anarchism "there can be no doubt that governmental power is a necessary and neutral instrument—a road that may lead in directions that may be good or bad but that is in itself neither good nor bad, a weapon that may be used for destruction or defense depending on who wields it or how it is wielded. Power, in short, is what you make it." [14] The trouble is that we have put power and planning in totalitarian contexts and cannot visualize them used as instruments of welfare in a democratic context.[15] But if power is what we make it; if it can be put to any use we wish, it is clearly up to us to determine to what use it shall be put. If we give up the idea that power is inherently bad; if we treat it as a neutral technique which depends for its ethical quality upon the ends to which we harness it,

[14] *Op. cit.*, p. 216–217.

[15] See Lerner's essay, "Democratic Ends and 'Totalitarian' Means," in his *Ideas for the Ice Age.*

the question then is: What shall be our aim? Let it be stated simply. We must use power to keep and maintain freedom.

Without power freedom is impossible. "The end of power is to make men free," Alexander D. Lindsay points out.[16] To use power for such an end is admittedly a dangerous and difficult task. But if we are to preserve and protect what is valid in the democratic method, it is a task we must assume. It demands that power be made a weapon in the service of freedom. This involves a new conception of the relation between power and freedom, in which we look upon them not as opposites, but recognize that without power we cannot have freedom and without freedom power stripped of its ethical justification.

[16] *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

V

It is clear that the world today is moving slowly but surely in the direction of collectivism. It is a movement filled with promise and danger. It can mean fulfillment, a new and richer life for men; or it can mean frustration, the loss of liberty and a new age of tyranny. It is a movement which needs the guidance and the leadership of the Christian churches. It is not too much to say that man's future welfare may depend in no small degree upon whether this collectivism can be created peacefully and then controlled democratically.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN CULTURAL DISLOCATION

By CHARLES DUELL KEAN

Postwar America is undergoing a period of profound economic unrest, manifested most obviously by the large number of major strikes, but demonstrated also by a number of other important cultural phenomena. The nature of this economic unrest provides an unusual opportunity to analyze and appreciate the meaning of religion—of religion, qua religion—in culture by observing its meaning in the context of cultural conflict.

The present period of economic unrest is a period of cultural dislocation. It does not require much insight to recognize that the dominant contemporary symptom, the major strikes, concern issues far more profound than mere questions of the relative positions of wages and profits in an anticipated seller's market. Regardless of the official propaganda of large corporations, and regardless of what many trades-union members may think they are doing—indeed, regardless of even the most advanced understanding in long range union strategy—the strikes symptomize a cultural conflict in which the nature and destiny of man is the primary issue.

When such a statement is made, it does not mean that the issues of stating theories about the nature and destiny of man are ever the serious immediate end of specific historic conflicts, nor that these issues are ever either involved in or decided by such conflicts in any clear cut fashion. Issues concerning the nature and destiny of man are cultural issues, and cultural issues always deal with prevailing norms within a civilization. Consequently, while the present unrest divides men into opposing groups along a variety of lines, the divisions cannot represent adequately the underlying cultural issues. At best they can only point in this direction. This is because all possible groupings within Western civilization have in general the same cultural background, and also because vital self-conscious groupings arise from immediate problems and, therefore, cannot be unambiguously related to issues of prevailing norms.

An era of cultural dislocation occurs whenever the evolution of civilization reaches a point where accepted cultural norms, instead of providing a tolerable interpretation of experience within that civilization, result in frustration and unfulfillment. This occurs whenever either the technological evolution of that situation has resulted in processes and institutions which are incapable of adequate rationalization or description within the categories of that culture, or whenever the political evolution has reached a stage of such advanced institutional obsolescence that they lack sufficient vitality and relevance to channel the social and economic processes. As a matter of fact, the two aspects accompany each other and are in a dialectical relationship to each other.

Any culture rests primarily upon the dialectical relationship between technics and politics—that is between the institu-

tions and processes by which the civilization supplies the many real and imagined needs of its people and, on the other hand, the system of official and unofficial institutions and other controls by which it regulates itself and provides for social coherence. Any culture is primarily the self-interpretation of that civilization in terms of both a rationalization of that dialectic and also other forms of description of it. But all cultures are concerned primarily with prevailing norms.

Religion is the soul of culture. No culture can exist without its religion, and when its religion is dead, it is dead, even though there may be traces left of its ideology to confuse the meaning of the cultural norm which eventually succeeds it after a long and drawn out process of transition. Religions die slowly, and, consequently, cultures die slowly, so that in periods of transition people may live in more than one culture at the same time—or rather in a cultural flux in which more than one strain is in competition with others to become the descriptive norm of that civilization.

The function of religion in culture is to provide (1) the normal basis for the self-interpretation of the individual personality within that culture, in terms of its individual meaning and its relationship to the whole range of groups and institutions, whether simple in constellation or complex; (2) to provide the symbolism in which the community of members of that society is realized; (3) to describe the orientation of both individuals and larger groups toward history and beyond history. Inasmuch as all cultural forms are utilized in the context of the ambiguous relationship of man to history, religion—in the three ways just listed—provides the method by which the problems resulting from that ambiguity are either resolved, evaded, or both.

A religion fulfills these three functions primarily by its mythology, but also by other things, such as religious institutions and systems of ethical values which are given a religious sanction. It will be obvious that both religious institutions and ethical codes rest upon the mythology and are originally determined by it, even though the experience of men living in these institutions and by these codes will have its effect upon the evolution of their mythology. Another intrinsic element of religion, its liturgy, is dramatized mythology, so that, while liturgical forms dating from primitive understandings may persist, the meaning given to those forms is always related to the mythology current when they are used.

Since the purpose of all religion is to provide for the three functions in the ambiguous context of the relationship of man to history, the purpose cannot be satisfied except by a dialectical relationship between the life of a group and a pictorial description of existence which appears to transcend the immediate ambiguity. In other words, all mythology is group mythology, just as all religion is cultural. The mythology is a description of experience, more or less in the form of story, which appears to relate men now to fundamental origins and to ultimate destiny in such a way as to provide an orientation for existence and to provide a basis upon which problems may be understood and decisions made. While type mythologies have usually been in the form of legendary narratives with particular heroes held up as pat-

terns, they do not necessarily take this form.

There is a difference between mythology and imagery, even though every mythology has its imagery and symbolism and structure of idea-patterns. The imagery and symbolism which were pertinent to an earlier phase of religious evolution may persist in the general culture long after their original religious setting has lost its cultural place. In the earliest days of the Christian era, for instance, the terminology associated with religion was so generally ascribed to the traditional Graeco-Roman mythologies, which had largely lost their cultural relevance, that Christians with a different mythology were regarded as atheists.

On the other hand, aspects from an earlier stage in religious evolution which survive in later periods may be borrowed by the newer religious institutions, and, indeed, expropriated and given new meaning and new relevance. Thus old imagery acquires a new mythology, and attempts to understand it in terms of its origins rather than in terms of its use result in confusion, although the very fact that it had a different mythological setting in the past cannot be ignored because the engrafting is never completely successful and also causes confusion.

Religious institutions, with their mythologies more or less unchanged, although progressively less appreciated, may survive in an era when men are actually living by other mythologies and in other institutions. Such survival means that the institutions and their mythologies may be mistaken for providing something which they are not giving, and that consequently man's self-interpretation may be confused. It also means, however, that these survivals are actually serving some other social purpose than the one which they and society at large regard them as fulfilling. It finally means that they serve to cross-fertilize the actual religion of the culture in which they are.

It is inconceivable that culture can exist without religion, because both the individuals in a civilization have to have presented to them a tolerable rationalization or interpretation of their experience, and the institutions within that civilization need an orientation beyond immediate situations. But a religion grows out of the dialectical frame of reference which underlies the culture. It is a creature of culture, and only in a secondary sense a creator of culture. Religion and other aspects of any culture —its philosophy, its ethic, its anthropology, etc.—are rooted in the underlying dialectic between technics and politics, and while each may in its own way heighten the tension of that dialectic, their forms result from its particular nature. Consequently, both the pragmatic problems of cultural institutions—churches, schools, political parties, movements and groups of all sorts—and also their mode of self-awareness, depend for relevance upon the congruity with which they are related to the basic dialectic.

When religion is understood as referring to the actual mythological, institutional and ideological ways used to fulfill the three functions in a given culture, it will be obvious that the pragmatic adequacy of that religion is the most reliable barometer available to indicate the stability of the culture. As long as the culture is relatively congruent to the actual dialectical relationship between technics and politics, the people

who lie in that culture will tend to assume its mythology and take the religion for granted. In such circumstances religion will be pervasive and environmental, and, while differences of opinion about it may be found, they will concern details rather than the whole. When the underlying basis of the culture is confused, however, men do not realize it at once if at all. They discover the fundamental irrelevance of their cultural life by discovering the practical irrelevance of their religious presuppositions.

Cultural dislocation, on the premises of this essay, involves a sufficiently widespread experience of fundamental frustration by men, with reference both to the technological setting of their lives and the political and economic institutions within which they live, to lead them to question the meaning of their institutional frame of reference. Inasmuch as man only knows himself within such a frame of reference, such a questioning means that there is doubt whether man's own experience can be explained adequately to him in terms of his cultural categories, which are the only categories he has available for such an explanation. In other words, cultural dislocation involves deep uncertainty if not utter scepticism as to man's own understanding of his own meaning. Consequently his problem is a religious one.

The cultural problem is always related to a confusion of the dialectical relationship between the technics and politics of the civilization in which people live. Unless such confusion occurs, there is no problem; or, if some individuals question the adequacy of the prevailing cultural interpretations of experience, their criticism cannot be expected to revolutionize the situation. Before there can be a cultural dislocation of a sufficiently thorough-going kind to result in new syntheses and new ideologies there must have been an experience of incongruence within the old frame of reference resulting from the fact that, since all dialectical relationships between politics and technics are tentative, new evolutions inevitably lead to an eventual experience of inadequacy. The important thing to recognize is that the experience of inadequacy must itself have become a kind of cultural norm for there to be a profound cultural dislocation.

In situations of cultural dislocation—because the context of decision is confused—the traditional mythology no longer serves its purpose. It no longer serves as an adequate description of man's relationship to society nor as an adequate portrayal of his own meaning to himself. The irrelevance of mythology, however, only comes about gradually. Myths persist as vital forces after the circumstances which gave them pertinence have changed. They may become transformed so as to give them new relevance or they may become syncretically combined with new elements. Both developments usually take place. In times of cultural dislocation, however, these two developments do not suffice. The underlying meaning of a cultural dislocation is that more and more men—that groupings and classes within society—tend to be denied satisfaction from their traditional mythology without acquiring another which is sufficiently clear to be accepted.

The role of religion in times of cultural dislocation is shown first of all in the area of mythology. The dissatisfac-

tion which some elements within any society find in the traditional mythology results in a reaction on the part of those to whom this mythology appears still relevant. The effect is that periods of cultural dislocation see a renewed and aggressive vitality in the traditional mythology, but it is a spurious vitality because it is progressively and more obviously incongruent with the underlying dialectical situation between technics and politics upon which that culture rests. The fact remains that during periods of cultural dislocation, men are subjected to a kind of hysterical apologetics on behalf of their traditional mythology which does not happen in times of relative cultural stability when the prevailing mythology is environmental in its relationship to men and is almost to be taken for granted. At the same time, rival mythologies, which, because they arise from a common cultural background, can never be entirely opposite to the traditional one, compete for acceptance but always under the handicap that no matter how much more satisfactory they may appear to be intellectually, they are never the focus of a prevailing corporate self-consciousness. Indeed, competing mythologies become the solution to periods of cultural dislocation only when some minority group for which they are the basis of communal self-consciousness, seizes political power and thus by altering the nature of the immediate dialectical relationship between technics and politics provides a new mythology of general relevance.

Human experience in times of cultural dislocation appears generally to be more and more meaningless, because the traditional mythology no longer satisfies those who depend upon it. Since their culture is no longer congruent to the actual dialectical situation on the level of technics and politics, the basic elements of religion tend to lose their ability to fulfill their functions. Cultural dislocation is always marked by widespread religions scepticism and ethical cynicism for this very reason, since both individual experience and group relationships appear to be losing their meaningfulness. The inability of the members of any society, on the whole, to find a tolerable self-interpretation through their religious tradition is the incontrovertible evidence that their culture is dislocated.

The prevailing religion in Anglo-American culture for the past century and a half (actually longer) has been Capitalism. While forms of economic organization have changed radically a number of times in that period, Capitalism is only in a secondary sense concerned with economic organization. It has provided the mythology by which the three functions of religion—self-interpretation, appreciation of community, and orientation toward and beyond history—have been fulfilled for people, by and large. Capitalism, as a religion, has not existed without challenge from Christian institutions and mythologies, but functionally it has largely supplanted them without completely destroying them. Indeed, it has tended to preserve them for other purposes (safeguards to political and economic stability and as a consolation when its ability to point beyond history was questioned) and it has expropriated imagery and symbolism for them. The demonstration of the accuracy of this observation is the fact that a century ago, when the theories of Darwin and also of Biblical criticism became known, they rocked organized Christian churches

without really affecting the way the three functions of religion were actually fulfilled except to accelerate an already existing trend.

The first religious meaning of our contemporary cultural dislocation is that the mythology of Capitalism is less and less tolerable as a basis for self-interpretation to an ever greater number of people. The General Motors strike involves an emplicit challenge to Capitalist mythology as well as an over challenge to Capitalist strategy. Again, it is progressively less adequate as a description of the community of men within society, because by its own premises it has nothing real to say to the mechanically disinherited in times of depression or in times of economic uncertainty. Likewise, its portrayal of the orientation of men and groups to history appears to an ever larger group to point to war and destruction.

Historical evolution is laying bare the weaknesses and flaws in the Capitalist interpretation of things, since it cannot without total revision of its premises deal adequately with either technological unemployment nor with the economic unification of the world, but neither can it live in a world in which these two factors are operative and ignore them. Yet, just as its cultural adequacy is being challenged most completely, the religious pretensions of Capitalism become more aggressive than ever before. The propaganda with which the General Motors Corporation and other companies have been flooding the country deals with religious issues more than with political or economic problems. It is concerned with "the true end of man" and the meaning of human society more than with the legality or efficiency of types of industrial organization and policy or with the limits and scope of appropriate governmental regulation.

While the religious pretensions of Capitalism, although more vocal and aggressive than ever before in its history, are being exposed in common experience today as being incapable of fulfilling the functions of religion, once given the actual nature of the dialectical basis to modern culture, no other religion is really taking its place. There are claimants. Christianity is not a serious one at present, since the cleavage between Christianity and Capitalism is not sufficiently clear to the average man, since so much Christian imagery, symbolism and terminology has been expropriated by Capitalist culture, and since the religious institutions of Christianity have been reduced within that culture to the position of peripheral and elective organizations rather than serving as the normal basis for self-interpretation, communal self-consciousness and the general orientation toward history. For some small groups, Christianity may serve as the adequate competing religion, but those groups do not have either the numbers or the influence at present to control cultural directions.

Fascism, at least temporarily, has been disposed of as a possible claimant. While most men were far from clear as to what the war was all about, the combination of an aggressive and alert minority with the dominant political and economic interests of the Western democracies stopped short the Fascist bid to become the normal world religion. This was because the aggressive and alert minority realized that while the Fascist method of fulfilling the functions of religion

might appear to be more efficient the results were more horrible than the cultural vacuum created by the decline in meaningfulness on the part of Capitalism. A sufficiently powerful segment of the dominant political and economic interests were led to make common cause with this minority by the eventual realization of the Fascist threat to their own position even if they did not appreciate the religious meaning of the war. The conclusion of hostilities has only meant, however, that the particular German, Italian and Japanese variants of the Fascist religion have been eliminated. Fascism is always a potential claimant for the role of authoritative religion as long as a cultural vacuum remains.

Another competing religion, Communism, is still a force to be reckoned with. It has the advantage of even greater technical efficiency at fulfilling intellectually the functions of religion than Fascism had, and it is seriously aimed at supplying the particular economic needs, the failure to supply which is one of the great contributing causes of the present cultural vacuum. There are a number of reasons for the failure of Communism to become the prevailing religion. Perhaps the foremost is the fact that its overt challenge to religious Capitalism is so direct that it cannot succeed as long as Capitalism as a religion has any significant following, regardless of what may happen to the operations of Capitalist economics. Another reason for the failure is that Communism appears to an influential number to rationalize even more inexorably than ever the more profound mythological bases of the present culture, so that it does not represent so much a cultural change as a development of political economy within the frame work of the same culture. In making such a statement, one does not have to subscribe to the "economism" of Drucker, but rather one must observe the fact that the Druckers of the modern period are also significant cultural symptoms.

Still one more reason is the fact that Communism has been more or less successfully branded as the arch-heresy of the age, and made the bearer of the sins of the age. This means that the combination of Capitalist institutions and Christian churches have succeeded in making Communism by the prevailing definition the symbol of all threats to the established order, while at the same time saddling Communism with theoretical errors which are less ascribable there than to Capitalism. Thus Communism in being branded as religious heresy is regarded as the exponent of "economic determinism," in spite of the fact that "economic determinism" has been orthodox Capitalist dogma under the name of laissez-faire since the days of Harrington and Locke. Again, Communism is branded with the so-called sin of materialism, when actually Communist theory is simply a more intelligible rationalization of materialism (in the sense of regard for economic and technical values as primary) which has prevailed since the days of Descartes. Communism is, however, still a competing religion with considerable vitality.

When the modern cultural confusion is analyzed from the standpoint of religion, it will be seen that the fate of Capitalism, as religion, is the most significant symbol of the dislocation. Capitalism has developed a mythology in which the self-made man of resolution and industry, who seizes the ever-present opportunity aggressively, is the symbolic

pattern, and in which the familiar "rags to riches" theme is the basis for beatification. The fact that Henry Ford once tinkered with machines in a barn, and Edison was once a railroad telegrapher and Daniel Willard a brakeman, etc., makes these men saints, but the irrelevance of these success biographies to the life situations of more and more people today raises one of the first problems of Capitalist religion.

Capitalism, as a religion, has entrenched itself in the prevailing culture more successfully with its cosmology and anthropology than with its life-patterns. Its anthropology is based upon the myth that man is primarily, if not completely and solely, an acquisitive animal who responds more quickly and naturally to economic motivation for his own gain than to any other stimulus. The advertisements of most standard articles in popular magazines perpetuate this myth. Its cosmology is today best typified by the myth of "free enterprise" but rests upon a belief in pre-existent economic harmonies which will automatically provide prosperity for everybody on a "trickle down" conception if not interfered with by irrelevant regulations. Corresponding to this anthropology and cosmology is the ethic, the major tenet of which is "enlightened self-interest."

As described in the foregoing paragraph the anthropology, cosmology and ethic of Capitalist religion are quite over-simplified. It will also be noted that elements of all three aspects are discoverable in other religious formulations which cannot strictly be called Capitalist. It is not the purpose of this article to analyze all the religious aspects of Capitalism, but rather to show that Capitalism as a religion has reached a stage where its mythology no longer provides the basis for an adequate self-interpretation, self-awareness of community, and orientation to and beyond history. To make such a claim, one must first state that Capitalism as a religion was the faith by which men lived. It certainly was the faith by which those who controlled bourgeois society during the past century and a half thought they lived. Its premises underlay the Hague Conference where the basis for community was held to be in the fact that international business men would not use anything as destructive as war any more but would rather demand peaceful machinery. It was the faith which robbed the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations Covenant of any concrete relevance to the factors which made for war under the actual conditions of the prevailing dialectic between technics and politics and that stage in cultural evolution. It was the faith that made "Normalcy" the desideratum of the 1920's, not merely as a cynical disguise for the strategy of "devil take the hindmost" in practical business operations, but as the living faith of millions. It is the faith that has made the service club luncheon the normal parish church of those who actually maintain the tone of modern Western culture—a tone set in the "cathedral chapters" of the National Association of Manufacturers Board, the United States Chamber of Commerce executives and the Bankers Club. It is the faith that is preached by the advertising columns of newspapers and most periodicals, by the commercial announcements on the radio, but also by a large part of the editorial and news columns and radio programs.

But while the religious claims of Capitalism are being more aggressively advanced than ever, their very stridency reveals the depth of the cultural dislocation. In a world where technology has advanced to the stage where the productivity of existing machines so largely overbalances manpower that the present economic system can product goods more rapidly than incomes with which to purchase them, having a place in the economic system is no longer an adequate basis for self-interpretation. Vocational issues will always be involved in self-interpretation in any culture because vocation is one of the elemental ways of relating man to his community, but in a world where men have become relatively insignificant interchangeable parts in industrial processes, so that unemployment is an almost universal threat, few men can find their vocations contributing adequately to self-interpretation. To the extent that they discover this to be the case, they are no longer able to find an adequate basis for their existence in a major part of Capitalist mythology. What is happening, however, is that the growing awareness of the universal need for security as regards basic human needs outweighs the need for meaningfulness in employment. Consequently, those who feel the pressure do not so much consciously reject Capitalist mythology as they do certain aspects of the political and economic organization of Capitalist society. Those who are committed to the defense of the prevailing system for ideological reasons, however, tend to sense the religious implications of the struggle for security rather more than those who need the security. Every step toward the extension of social security is resisted on religious grounds because it actually constitutes a threat to Capitalist religion.

The second function of religion—that of providing the basis for an adequate community consciousness—has likewise become an issue in the cultural dislocation. As long as some plausibility could be ascribed to the "trickle-down" theory, and that was as long as the premises of the economy of scarcity were not challenged by the end of the American frontier and the staking out of world spheres of influence, just so long could Capitalism, as a religion, appear to bind men together. When, because of the operation of "the ceiling" in international expansion and because of the passing of the population curve by the productivity curve, these premises have no longer any intelligible justification, Capitalist religion divides men rather than unites them. As a matter of fact, Capitalist religion never did unite them even on its own terms—it provided rather for a tentative equilibrium on the basis of mutual self-interest in a society which was regarded as ultimately atomistic. Within this unity of parallel or mutual self-interest there was always plenty of conflict—much of it, *competition,* regarded as an indication of social health. Today, competition gives way almost completely to internal combination on the one hand or to governmental regulation on the other, both of which are denials of the premises of religious Capitalism, but which actually produce more immediate community than that which is theoretically more orthodox. But this philosophically makeshift revision of Capitalist operations actually reveals the serious inability of men to find true community in terms of Capitalist religion, because while it unifies them in some groupings, it accentuates at

the same time the conflict between parallel groups and even more seriously between supplemental groupings. Actually American isolationism is a true, in the sense of more traditional, representative of the carrying out of Capitalist religion in practical political situations. Its only legitimate alternative, which too often is a variant of the same thing, is the international cartel, which, instead of marking nation off from nation, marks class off from class in the world picture.

When it comes to providing a tolerable orientation toward history, the promises of Capitalism that the operation of its religious, philosophical and economic principles would result in a world of peace and plenty for all—that history would see an era of ever-better things for everybody—have been answered by two world wars and a major depression. If these were not sufficient answers, the fact that the war era ends not in peace but in a period of international and domestic political and economic uncertainty, containing the threats of both more war and more depression, should make the conclusion inescapable. It is significant that this aspect of religious Capitalism is not receiving the same emphasis as are the other elements in the propaganda of the day. During the war, the Committee for Economic Development struck this note, but the emasculation of the Full Employment Bill and Senator Taft's symptomatic stricture against the desirability of full employment as a goal make this aspect of the religion seem a little hollow no matter what else may be said. When it comes to orientation beyond history, modern Capitalist religion is in the position of maintaining that its premises are superhistorical in nature in the sense of being scientific and logical, but when it comes to fulfillment, its prophetic voice is both uncertain and ambiguous.

The existence of the Soviet Union for twenty-seven years and its successful resistance to Nazi aggression during the war serve to qualify if not deny the superhistorical premises of Capitalism since another system with contrary premises operates. The result of this and of a great many other factors, the most notable of which is domestic uncertainty, has tended to transform Capitalist eschatology into a cross between the realization of all that is good and true and beautiful and an ominous sense of après-moi-la-déluge.

The religious uncertainty is reflected in a parallel confusion as to the meaning of other aspects of culture. No previous culture, for instance, has set such high store by formal intellectual education as has the modern Western culture, but for more than a generation there has been a growing question as to what is the meaning of education and what is the function of educational institutions. The cleavage in the ranks of the educators represent something far more profound than a difference of opinion as to methods, content and analyses of personality and society. It represents a basic uncertainty as to the meaning of experience. While the champions of particular schools of thought may not show any such uncertainty themselves, the disparate nature of their ideas, in spite of their common cultural background, indicates a growing general uncertainty. The presuppositions enshrined in the Harvard University report seem to enshrine the problem in the proposed answer.

The religious confusion is above all reflected in the life of the organized

churches. In the course of the war, there was a great deal of talk about capitalizing on the need of mankind—"man's extremity is God's opportunity"—and programs were organized for work with servicemen, with war industry areas, and to influence public opinion on the subject of international relations. These programs have in many instances accomplished considerable good, but it is doubtful whether they have actually made traditional Christianity appear to be more relevant to the general life of the Western world than it was before. It rather appears to be the case that, despite this intensive effort, the postwar years will see a new low in the popular appreciation of organized Christian churches—because a war generation, particularly those returning from service, sees little if any purpose being served by the churches which makes a difference to people's lives. And the organized churches themselves are not too clear as to their own functions in the actual context in which they are. It is doubtful whether many denominational policies or programs or the average sermon exhibit much awareness of the existence of the dialectic between technics and politics which must be the basis for the culture framing them.

The situation of the organized churches in modern culture exhibits the fact that they have not really been primary channels of that culture's religion for a long time. In a sense, they have served and still serve secondary religious purposes. They complement what the prevailing religion supplies, but it is to Capitalism that men have looked and have been encouraged to look for the fulfillment of the three basic functions of religion. For many people the churches have served the important secondary purpose of providing a practical community locus for fellowship in thought and participation in group life. They have also provided a traditional, though progressively more meaningful setting for dignifying the normal crises of the family—birth, adolescence, marriage and death. It is not a question of whether the prevailing culture cares very much about it either.

This review of the present situation in Capitalist religion exhibits the fundamental role of religion in cultural dislocation. On the more profound levels, such periods are times of religious strife in the truest understanding of what that means. While competitors arise to challenge the pretensions of the prevailing religion since its adequacy is questioned, the aggressiveness of such a religion increases for a while in almost direct proportion to its irrelevance. Yet for the average man the period of cultural dislocation is not so much an experience of being fought for by rival faiths as it is a period of losing a vital relationship to one mythology without finding another. The only conceivable solution to his problem is the development of a culture which is congruent to the new nature of the dialectic between technics and politics, and such a culture will provide its own mythology in its own terms.

For Socialist Christians this means that a radical distinction must be drawn between insight into the meaning of the cultural dislocation of our times and stating what is the proper answer to the basic problem. A small group with creative insights can realize the dimensions of the crisis, and can provide both an educational and a prophetic witness to its generation. Only an institutional life which realizes within its experience a

living congruence to the new dialectical situation can provide the answer. Socialist Christians can interpret the problem and can anticipate the directions the answer will take, but that answer cannot be found in the context of inherited religious institutional life since the inadequacy of available religious resources for fundamental self-interpretation is part of the problem. It must be found in a new development.

Socialist Christians can, however, preserve the elemental and enduring aspects of the traditional Christian mythology so that those aspects may be available as vital and realistic and adequate components of a new religious development in a new cultural situation. By their radical criticism of the interpretation given to existence, they can to some extent salvage that which is truly Christian from the wreckage of a syncretic "Christian-Capitalism" and rescue from abuse and degradation imagery and symbolism which has been expropriated in the service of false gods.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Robert G. Middleton is Minister of the Baptist Church of the Evangel, Narbeth, Pa.

Reginald Johnson, who writes on the British Labour Government is one of the Industrial Secretaries of the British SCM.

Charles Kean is Rector of the Grace Episcopal Church, Kirkwood, Mo.

Richard Day has returned from a chaplaincy in the Army and is studying for his Doctorate at Columbia University.

John Dillenberger has returned from a chaplaincy in the Navy and is studying for the Doctorate at Union Seminary and Columbia.

BOOK REVIEWS

JUSTICE AND THE SOCIAL ORDER, *by Emil Brunner.* Harper Brothers. $3.00.

Emil Brunner's new book on "Justice and the Social Order" is in every respect rewarding and illuminating. It is a definite advance over his "Divine Imperative", which was nevertheless very important because it dealt creatively with the relation between the love commandment, which lies at the foundation of Christian ethics, and the relative forms of justice, which the world must achieve in its institutional life. But the distinctions made in that book frequently struck American readers abstract. Part of this difficulty was due to the traditions of liberal Christianity in which love and justice were so simply equated that Brunner's distinctions seemed unreal. Yet part of the difficulty was Brunner's.

One of the great advances in the present volume is Brunner's treatment of equality as the regulative principle of justice. In the previous volume he was afraid of the idea of equality as a derivative of "Stoic rationalism". In this volume he proves how inevitably and intuitively all men define justice in terms of some principle of equality. This does not justify rationalistic forms of equalitarianism, which fail to recognize the organic inequalities in life and history; and Brunner illumines the relation between regulative equality and historic inequalities with greater wisdom than any purely rationalistic political philosophy.

In the discussion of the relation of the individual to the community he shows how a Christian view of both the individual and the social dimension of the person is able to avoid both an abstract collectivism and an atomistic individualism. The book proves clearly that there are tremendous resources in the Christian faith for an adequate political and economic ethic which have not been previously exploited because orthodox Christianity has been to Biblicist and literalistic to understand the deepest insights and liberal Christianity usually capitulated to the prejudices of our age.

In exploiting these resources it seems to me that Brunner has properly widened the gulf between himself and Barth; and I am sorry to hear that continental Christianity is, on the whole inclined to follow Barth rather than Brunner. This seems unfortunate because Brunner does not strain to eliminate any possible insight which might come to a Christian man from other than purely Biblical sources; while he proves at the same time that the whole human situation can only be understood from the standpoint of a Biblical faith.

There are a few places where one might wish a greater circumspection. Brunner seems to attribute the primacy of the state in a community primarily to its possession of preponderant power, without quite understanding that the authority of the state is derived not so much from its possession of power but rather from a majesty which transcends its power. It is the majesty of the com-

munity itself, articulated and symbolized in the state. Its power is derived from that majesty and not the other way around.

In dealing with modern totalitarian tendencies Brunner attributes the drift toward the omnicompetent state to the fact that the Christian substance of civilization has been destroyed and therefore the lesser and more organic loyalties, such as that of the family, have lost their power to withstand the state. This is certainly one part of the story. But he does not consider to what degree our malady is caused by the necessities of a technical civilization in which the ever increasing intricacies of the economic process seem to demand ever increasing political power to manage the whole communal-economic process.

These are minor criticisms. The book deserves a very wide influence among us.

R. N.

ONE DESTINY. AN EPISTLE TO THE CHRISTIANS, *by Sholem Asch.*

This slim but powerful volume by one of our truly great writers approaches the problem of anti-Semitism and Nazism in a manner very different from the one to which we are accustomed. It does not content itself to say that anti-Semitism is the denial of the universalism of love in which we see the essence of Christianity; it blames anti-Semitism right on Christendom itself. It does this, not in resentment and hatred but in the deep sadness that befits one who has made it his hard business in life to praise before his fellows that which they dislike. Who else, as a professing Jew and member of the Communist Party, writes books to glorify St. Paul and his Master? Where else, in communist writings these days, can one find lavish praise for what the Catholic clergy and the Vatican in particular have done to protect, rescue, and hide thousands and thousands of Jews from Hitler's manhunt throughout Europe? Such a man can claim to be heard by us, for reasons of the broadness of his view and the generosity of his heart.

What he says, with the power and art that are the envy of minor men, is that from the Austrian party which called Hitler's National Socialism directly stems itself Christian-Social and is the strongest party in Austria to this day; and that Hitler personally declared his debt of gratitude for his "inspiration" to Lueger, the head of that party and predecessor in it of Seipel, Dollfuss, and Schuschnigg. These are historical facts. Asch may not be quite right in assessing anti-Semitism between the various countries—it is more virulent on Protestant than on Catholic soil; fascist Portugal was a heaven to the hunted, and even Franco's Spain, while far from friendly, permitted the refugees to pass with more or less unpleasantness. Against this stands the terrible indictment by Asch of another ardently Catholic country, his native Poland, which was chosen by Hitler as the proper site for the fiery ovens in which to burn the millions of Jews. Surely the picture of present-day Christendom is not reassuring.

But the point of the book is not in these indictments. The point is in the discussion of the Gospel writings themselves, which no doubt are designed to, and do, inspire hatred and contempt for Judaism. This reviewer is not competent to judge Asch's critique of the Gospel narratives, which exonerate Pilate and through him the Romans, on whose

good will the writers and their new church depended, and are thus forced to concentrate all the blame on the Jews alone. But even so Jewish rejection of the Christ remains. There will not be many among us who know how to meet religious, rather than racial, anti-Semitism; this reviewer does not know it. For these last years again have brought home to use the lesson that, whether we like it or not, history is made and suffered by collectives; that the individual judgment can and must rise over the collective judgment but cannot supersede it. Asch's solution is that of a pious Jew and pious Christian, who, faced with the choice between the Johannine curse on the Jews as the children of the devil and the Pauline theory that the final consummation of redemption will bring the Jews home to the Kingdom of God and His Son, decides for the latter and puts all his hope in it. But surely, in order that this come to pass, the redeemed must first learn to love their enemies.

EDUARD HEIMANN

THE GREAT RETREAT, *by Nicholas Timasheff*. E. P. Dutton Co. $5.00.

Professor Timasheff, a sociologist and political scientist of Russian birth and culture, subjects the history of Soviet culture to his scrutiny in this book and comes to the conclusion that most of the characteristic dogmas of Marxist utopianism have been forced to yield to the traditional culture of Russia. This is "The Great Retreat." Marxist internationalism has been replaced by Russian patriotism. The extravagantly experimental school failed to achieve ordinary standards of literacy for its pupils and gave way to a more conventional school. The early Marxist effort to reduce the family to minimal proportions has been given up in favor of laws and mores, making the family more secure. Easy divorce and abortion have been replaced by laws making divorce difficult and abortion illegal. The church, once suppressed, is now tolerated.

Marxist determinism of the earlier variety has been defined as "bourgeois mechanism" in favor of the more voluntaristic elements in Marxist thought. Unfortunately, according to Professor Timasheff, the dictatorship, required by a utopian creed in order to change a culture and economy forcibly, has not been modified in terms analogous to these other modifications. On the contrary it has become more and more absolute. It combines Byzantine absolutism with an authority drawn from Marxist dogma.

This study does not present anything essentially new in what is known about the developments in Russia. But it marshals all the evidence. It would be more convincing if Professor Timasheff had not sought to prove by graphs and statistics what Russia would be like if she had not had a revolution. Such speculations are not too plausible. But they do not invalidate the important chapters of the study, which give a remarkably comprehensive account of the results of a conflict between a revolutionary creed and a traditional culture.

R. N.

THE CHRISTIAN FUTURE, *by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy*. Charles Scribners' Sons, New York, 1946. 248 pp. $2.50.

The assumption of this book is that the Christian faith must always address

itself to the cultural problem. The task which the author sets for himself is the distinct necessity of translating the relevance of the Christian faith to the "warriors and thinkers" of our age, those who fought with some faith and courage, and those who mould the thought patterns of our day. It is the particular rift in our society between these two classes, according to the author, which lies at the basis of the upheavals of the last generation and of ours. This alone can be cured by the daring creativity demanded by the Christian faith, which, to use the sub-title of the book, is "The Modern Mind Outrun."

The actual sections of the book in which this is done are both few and short. Since the author gives such an excellent analysis of the cultural situation of America since 1890 and has such a fresh approach to the meaning of the Christian faith, the brevity of the sections on the avowed intention of the book is not to be lamented, but rather appreciated as a necessary background for an understanding of his suggestions. If there is a defect in the book, it is the lack of a systematic organization of the materials, so that the sections, though they are meant to be an organic whole, contribute to the theme in somewhat atomistic fashion. It is thus impossible for a reviewer to do justice to the wealth of suggestive material in each section. One can only give plimpses of parts of the book in the hope that the reader will be led to examine the book in its entirety.

Among sections dealing with "Interim America," that period between 1890 and 1940 in which the suburb and the factory are predominant and man is blind to the real stirrings of life in spite of war, there is a very provocative account of the relation of Chinese thought to our spiritual situation. The author suggests that "the Theosophical Society has not imported into America one per cent of the Oriental thinking which has been introduced by pragmatism." It is not denied that "Master Confucian Dewey," who "was silent about the gods" who formed the basis of his heritage, had a useful function to perform in an "America who had to get inside herself." But it was James, not Dewey, who "knew that it was an interim" only. A consolidated America in an unconsolidated world faces problems for which pragmatism not only is insufficient but actually the line in which tragedy is inevitable.

It is the contention of the author that the Christian Future alone has the possibilities of dealing with this situation as well as all the cultural cycles of man, which, though related to each other, always demand something new as their characteristic answer. Whereas, "the pagan natural man begins with birth and lives forward through time toward death, the Christian lives in the opposite direction, from the end of life unto a new beginning." (p. 67) Eschatological thinking is not quietism, but gives the possibility of creating a future. Through it man has the potentiality of being ready for every age, of being able, with the Holy Spirit, to outthink the spirits of the age. The way in which this is done does not result in the erasing of existing loyalties, but in their unification by a power reaching back from the end of time. Only so can faith be related directly to the area of life in which men actually live.

That is why the author is concerned with the concrete problem of the rela-

tion of the returning soldiers to the thought patterns of our day. These men had been taught to avoid all conflict and pain. But as soldiers, they were forced into robust action in which the inevitable conflict and pain became agony because their actions betrayed what they had been taught. Unless their action and the thought of our time, however it may have to be changed, can be woven into the very foundations of peace, we shall be forced into a third war, another "make-up examination" for the "same assignment."

If the thinkers of our age saw history from the end of time, they would know that the Cross is the reality of existence and that conflict is of the essence of life. By combining the stamina of the warrior and the changed reason of the thinker, something new may be possible, so that we might have "voluntary conflicts spread thin over innumerable occasions which should take the place of the huge explosion called war." (p. 232) This would be the continuous occupation with a world, which, though ostensibly at peace, actually is "still at war, in anarchy, in revolution, in decay"; but at least the vicious circle would be broken between the thinkers of peace and the fighters who arise because the thought of peace is not equivalent to peace.

Aside from the redirection of thought and act for our culture, the author has some very concrete suggestions for our suburban-factory culture. He feels that the sabbatical year might be extended to all the professions. The reason for this is found in the suggestive distinction between leisure and holiday, in which the latter becomes the possibility, not of idleness, but of the creative and redirecting character of life. For industry, monotony could be broken and communities established by small groups working on a common job over a period of several years. These could be farmed out by corporations and after several years, broken and reconstituted by different people. The author feels this might give a rhythm of newness and meaning to life in the factory system. For the young, camps could be utilized for experiments in living and planning, so that the faith of the young and the reason of the old would be united with an eye to the present and future.

The author is aware that the socalled realists may scoff at these suggestions. But anyone who knows the life of the author—not only his scholarly competence, but his work in Germany in the decentralization of industry, in sociological problems for the Daimler automobile factory, in heading the Frankfurt "Akademie der Arbeit," in sponsoring voluntary labor movements uniting workers, farmers, and students in rebuilding communities, and his work in this country in the training of leaders for the CCC camps, including the much publicized Camp William James—will know that his analysis and suggestions grow out of real experience.

A scholar, social-philosopher, theologian, man of action—it is no wonder that in this book there is such a penetrating analysis and wealth of suggestions. One simply cannot do justice to the book in a review, but can only testify that he is privileged to share in the Christian faith of a man at work in the world.

JOHN DILLENBERGER

THE IDEA OF CHRIST IN THE GOSPELS, *by George Santayana.* New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1946. Pp. 266. $2.75.

When I first started to read this book I was interested in seeing what Santayana had learned. I soon found myself being taught. The situation reminded me of an expression of a friend of mine in the army, a battalion commander, who, when he had overstepped himself and got into trouble, used to say, "There I was talking when I should have been listening!" Often in a review the reviewer talks when he might better be listening. So often he seems to be sitting on top of the book in question, with it thoroughly mastered. I doubt if he has really mastered it if it is a book of importance, especially if he has read it only once. And this book of Santayana's is important—as the blurb reads, "possibly the most important he has written" and I have read it only once.

I will not try to summarize the contents. Let me rather make some random observations, which, in spite of what I have said, will be for the most part critical. But before doing that I must say just one emphatic positive word: that there is much in the book of great interest—many insights about Christ that are worth a great deal of study.

Santayana has always had a genial interest in religion in general and Christianity in particular. The Christian myth has had a peculiar fascination for him. Formerly, however, Santayana spoke of myths as "supervening on life" *(Reason in Religion).* Also he spoke of "cosmic fables" *(Three Philosophical Poets)* which performed the same function. Now he has come to the point of saying, in effect—these are not his words —that a myth *intervenes.* He speaks of Christ as Redeemer and Saviour and shows how the idea of Christ performs that function.

When I use Santayana's phrase, "the idea of Christ", I am preparing to contrast it with Christ as a *fact.* But I must say first that Santayana goes farther than many New Testament critics of the *Formgeschichte* school in taking the data for this idea from the Gospels. However, he finally pulls it out of history and makes it purely an idea, albeit a powerful one.

At this point you may ask, "But who would have ever *thought* of such an idea —to the Greeks foolishness and to the Jews a stumbling block?" However, Santayana says it is a revelation in history. What I mean when I say that he pulls it out of history is that like a Neo-Platonist (which he is in part—although here he rejects mysticism in favor of mythology) he abandons history. This means that in an ultimate sense he does not take mythology seriously. He says, "Nothing in this [mythical] knowledge bears to be pressed or scrutinised too closely; but most of it if taken lightly and conventionally, as we take language, helps to carry us prosperously through life." Myth tells us about the life of the spirit which is produced in the depths of matter; and while the life of the spirit is real, it is not ultimate. Behind and beyond lies matter—not *dead* matter to be sure, rather *vital* matter. (Indeed, it is the final intractibility of this vitality which accounts for sin in Santayana's view.)

In his essay on "Substance", Woodbridge refers to the portrayal of Democritus in Santayana's *Dialogues in Limbo.*

"We may," says Woodbridge, "dream as much as we like and construe nature in moral or passionate terms which are agreeable to our imagination, hopes, and fears, but we are awake and sane only when we construe her in terms of atoms and the void." He goes on to speak of substance which "made Democritus laugh and Spinoza love." In other words, the ultimate ground of life is indifferent to us—and Woodbridge doubts whether you can even apply that word to it, so accidental is our life with its morality, its aspirations and its religion.

It seems to me there are two ways of attacking such a position. The first is to stress morality—not as moralism (which Santayana handles beautifully although he does not relax the tension so much by forgiveness as by an imitation of a distorted picture of Christ—and Santayana has always insisted on the necessity for "disintoxication" with moral values. Cf. *Platonism and the Spiritual Life.*) Stress morality rather as the search for the good, as decision, drive, direction of the total personality. This is to attach myth firmly to "unconditional concern"—where it seems to me to belong—not just to a general sense of the poetic or the metaphysical. Here you meet Christ not merely as an *idea* but as a *fact,* embedded in history. (This is too involved to explain here; but the approach of Kierkegaard in *Philosophical Fragments* can be used, since Kierkegaard treats Christ as an idea and a fact.) And myth is the interpretation of that fact.

The other way to attack Santayana's position is to ask sharply and critically whether it makes any sense to speak of "any object, even the whole universe"? Can the universe be an object to me? If so, it means that I can stand outside of it and criticize it—a manifest impossibility, since it assumes a non-existent point of view. Santayana doesn't criticize the universe, to be sure. Like Margaret Fuller, he accepts it—gracefully if not gratefully. But this is no answer really. Bertrand Russell can rant at it from the same (impossible and imaginary) point of view. We indeed may know something about the universe; but the ultimate ground of life remains a mystery apprehendable only in terms of faith, expressible mythologically, which we arrive at—or better, meet—through decision and grace. There is no getting around this myth. We see the universe through it, not around it; and the universe never becomes an object for us.

The universe can be called an object, the ultimate ground of life known (as Santayana or Woodbridge "know" it) only in terms of a world of thought—not in terms of a world of thought and action in history. To say that the universe is an object is indeed an heroic triumph of the mind. But then I wonder who is living in *The World of Walter Mitty?*

Of course I may be talking when I should be listening.

RICHARD W. DAY

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